



Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Special Meeting

July 26, 2010 -- 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. -- Lacey Community Center

Minutes

ELAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sue Winn - Family Child Care Provider
Paula Smith - Head of School, University Child Development School
James Skucy - Executive Director, Benton Franklin Head Start
Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH - State Health Officer, Department of Health
Dr. Ilene Schwartz - Children with Disabilities
Marie Zackuse - Tulalip Tribes of Washington
Bob Butts- Assistant Superintendent, Public Policy & Planning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Lorena Lowell - Child Care Center Director/Owner (Co-Chair)
Dr. Bette Hyde - Director, Department of Early Learning
Representative Roger Goodman - Washington State House of Representatives
Leslie Goldstein - Executive Policy Advisor, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Ann Daley - Executive Director, Higher Education Coordinating Board
Nina Auerbach – Chief Executive Officer & President, Thrive-by-Five
Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer- Head Start State Collaboration Office, Department of Early Learning

ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Curtis King – Washington State Senate
Charles Earl - Director, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
Maria Vera - Parent & Early Learning Expert
Jada Rupley – Associate Superintendent (Co-Chair)
Todd McNerney - Parent
Peter Berliner - PRI Makers Network Managing Director, Philanthropy Northwest
Susan Dreyfus - Secretary, Department of Social & Health Services
Representative Larry Haler - Washington State House of Representatives
Amber Havens - Educational Training Partners
Robin Higa - Parent
Senator Claudia Kauffman - Washington State Senate

OVERALL PURPOSE

The purpose of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) is for representatives from the state's early learning stakeholder communities to provide input and recommendations to the Department of Early Learning (DEL) so that DEL's strategies and actions are well-informed and are broadly supported by parents, early care providers, health/safety experts and interested parties. The Governor holds final authority for policy decisions.

WELCOME - AGENDA REVIEW

Lorena Lowell provided a brief overview of the agenda for the afternoon. She also introduced new members; Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer, Head Start State Collaboration Office Project Manager in the Department of Early Learning and Bob Butts (interim appointment), Assistant Superintendent, Public Policy & Planning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Kelli Bohanon explained that the inclusion of the Head Start State Collaboration Office on the Council is a requirement of the State Advisory Council federal grant.

EARLY LEARNING PLAN

For more information see: PowerPoint

- John Howell provided a brief overview of the Early Learning Plan (ELP) development process and content. He referenced the plan's origins in Kids Matter and Washington Learns. He emphasized the in-depth work of developing the plan undertaken by six work groups convened under the umbrella of the ELP Steering Committee. He also spoke about the extensive outreach conducted on both the initial draft of the plan and later revisions.
 - Kelli Bohanon provided a summary of the cultural competency review undertaken by national expert Betty Emarita. The review focused on two key areas:
 - Things/concepts that may be missing within the ELP and looking for frames that would make the document inaccessible, unusable, or unpalatable to a substantial minority of Washington citizens; and
 - Reviewing the ELP outreach processes and suggestions for ways that the concepts in the plan can be more specific to ensure the inclusion of diverse and underrepresented communities.
- Betty Emarita had three recommendations for immediate incorporation into the ELP:
- Governance model that represents diversity in the state;
 - Data on all levels so that we are reaching all communities (all voices need to be heard); and
 - Integration and involvement of communities in governance process (feedback loops).

- John Howell provided an overview of major changes to the Plan since the December draft was released. The only new strategy added to the ELP December draft is early numeracy although

additional text has been added for improving child care subsidies, and child care licensing. At the time the initial governance section was drafted, the State Advisory Council application was under development and included a heavy emphasis on governance. The Plan now reflects the work that was done for that application so that the two documents are consistent. The work will continue on indicators for years to come. Key indicators were addressed, and there will be continued conversations with experts in the field.

- Rhonda Peterson presented a brief summary of the ELP feedback process. Through various outreach mechanisms, around 3,500 people provided input to the plan. Many suggestions have been incorporated into the document and a document summarizing these comments as well as responses will be added to the Plan as Appendix K. Additionally; updates, clarifications, corrections will continue to be added to the Plan over time.
- John Howell spoke about next steps for the ELP. He explained that the hope is that there is consensus at today's meeting to recommend adoption of the plan by DEL, OSPI, and Thrive by Five. Final determinations will be made by these agencies within the next week and the document will then go out for formatting and printing. Three documents will be available electronically on September 1: the Early Learning Plan, a user-friendly summary document, and a 3-year action plan outlining how the three lead agencies will integrate the ELP into their work over the next three years.

Council Discussion and Call for Recommendation of Plan Adoption

Lorena Lowell opened the floor for discussion:

- Nina Auerbach thanked the coordinating team for all of their work as well as thanking DEL and Bette Hyde. She commented that the strategies on home visiting and subsidies need to be updated to reflect current circumstances.
- Ilene Schwartz expressed support for the Plan and commented that while the Plan says "all children" throughout, there are a few places where inclusion could be addressed more explicitly.
- Maxine Hayes expressed strong support for the prominence of health throughout the Plan. She commented that the version we have is good enough to begin the work of implementation and expressed satisfaction that the three lead agencies have been able to pull out elements for a 3-year action plan.
- Sue Winn spoke about the excitement of being able to point to things happening now that address strategies in the Plan. She commented that the strength of the ELP is that it is for everyone. She mentioned having received phone calls from people saying that their feedback had been acknowledged.

- Paula Smith commented that she is very happy about the data provided that addresses so much and how well the data is tied to the language; was very easy and exciting to read.
- Lorena Lowell commented that within the ELP, the door is open for all; not only child development and health, but also for providers and licensing.
- Jim Skucy spoke about liking the way that the Plan is characterized. The vision is very complete and far-reaching, the concept of the whole child is displayed throughout the whole document, embraces everyone with good health and nutrition as well as, Head Start and ECEAP. He also expressed concerns about the budget situation and commented that we were successful during last year's legislative session but we will need to continue to push this year as resources are very limited.
- Lorena Lowell moved to recommend the ELP for adoption by the three lead agencies: all members present were in favor.
- Sue Winn commented that the ease of the reading speaks to the volume of the Plan. Everyone who worked on it, worked on it hard
- Bette Hyde shared that reading the Plan made her cry, everybody pitched in, it was a true group effort. We don't just want to read it, we want to do it.
- Sue Winn asked how often the 3-Year Action Plan will be looked at.
 - Bette Hyde responded that to be effective, it will need to be reviewed quarterly.
 - Kelli Bohanon explained that the interim plan for the three agencies to provide updates will be through the joint resolution reporting schedule. A more extensive governance plan will be designed and implemented as we move forward.
- Senator Roger Goodman commented on the need for a concise breakdown of the 36 strategies.
 - Ilene Schwartz referred to the table on page 108, noting that space for progress notes could be added.
- Kelli Bohanon asked the council for their thoughts on the types of outreach that should be undertaken as materials are distributed beginning September 1. She spoke about having a council celebration at the September ELAC meeting
 - Sue Winn spoke in favor of seeking media coverage as well as reaching out to advocacy groups and coalitions.
 - Ilene Schwartz suggested piggybacking on back to school activities/meetings.
 - Lorena Lowell commented that a lot of outreach to communities was done during the development process, would be good to go back out to communities.
 - Nina Auerbach mentioned sharing information at quarterly coalition meetings.

- Lorena Lowell commented that child care providers need to be reached so that they can see how the plan is a positive for them.
- Leslie Goldstein spoke about the need for interactive tools that reflect the diverse situations of state and local communities.

CLOSING REMARKS

Lorena Lowell closed the meeting by thanking all participants and announcing that the next meeting will be on September 13, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Lacey Community Center.